



National Milk Producers Federation

National Milk Producers Federation • 2101 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA 22201 • 703-243-6111 FAX 703-841-9328

Agri-Mark, Inc.

Arkansas Dairy Cooperative Association

Associated Milk Producers, Inc.

California Dairies, Inc.

Casa-Clay Creamery, Inc.

Continental Dairy Products, Inc.

Cooperative Milk Producers Assn.

Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.

Dairymen's Marketing Cooperative, Inc.

Dairyview Cooperative Inc.

Elkworth Cooperative Creamery

Farmers Cooperative Creamery

First District Association

Foremost Farms USA

Lion O'Leary, Inc.

Lone Star Milk Producers, Inc.

Mantowoc Milk Producers Coop.

MD & VA Milk Producers Cooperative Association, Inc.

Michigan Milk Producers Assn.

Mid-West Dairymen's Company

Niagara Milk Cooperative, Inc.

Northeast Dairy Association

Peterson Farms Dairy, Inc.

St. Albans Cooperative Creamery, Inc.

Scholar County Coop Milk Producers' Assn.

Select Milk Producers, Inc.

Southeast Milk, Inc.

Swiss Valley Farms, Co.

Tarrant County Creamery Assn.

United Dairymen of Arizona

Upland Farms Cooperative, Inc.

Zia Milk Producers

May 13, 2005

Secretary Michael Johanns
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Johanns:

35-4280627
APHIS

NMPF wishes to compliment your agency's efforts to expedite the adoption of a mandatory national animal identification system (NAIS), which was discussed by you and your staff last week. Both the NAIS Draft Strategic Plan and Draft Program Standards document have been too long in the development, and NMPF is pleased that the public will finally have the opportunity to gain further insight and understanding of the plans for implementation of NAIS.

NMPF members believe that NAIS must be implemented at the earliest possible time as a mandatory program, so as to be better able to protect our national dairy herd from the possible introduction of highly contagious foreign animal diseases such as Foot-and-Mouth (FMD), disease or to prevent the reemergence of costly domestic diseases such as Bovine Tuberculosis. NMPF believes that at some point in the near future, NAIS must become mandatory for all producers or owners of livestock in the U.S. All species and segments of the livestock industry may become impacted by any particular disease event as commingling occurs.

Given the extraordinary effort that will be required to fully engage the entire livestock industry and the time and cost that will be required to develop and implement the necessary infrastructure to support NAIS as a mandatory program, NMPF supports the current timeframe outlined in the Draft Strategic Plan. However, given the current and continuing vulnerability of the livestock industry to foreign animal disease threats, NMPF believes every effort should be made to adhere to the target timeframes and supports January 2009 as the absolute target date to have NAIS fully operational.

Our great hope is that the creation and implementation of this system becomes a positive, lasting legacy of your time as Agriculture Secretary, and we will work with you and others in the department to help ensure its expeditious adoption.

Yours truly,

Jerome J. Kozak
President & CEO

National Milk Producers Federation

cc: Bill Hawks, Under Secretary, Marketing and Regulatory Services
Dr. Ron DeHaven, APHIS Administrator

Jerry Kozak, President/Chief Executive Officer

Charles Beckendorf, Chairman

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